

**In the Claims:**

Please cancel claims 32-43. The claims are as follows:

1-4. (Canceled)

5. (Previously presented) A method for managing contract data, comprising:

receiving a contract datagroup  $D_G$  by a decentralized execution system (DES) from a procurement contract management system (PCMS) over a data path within a computer network, said contract datagroup  $D_G$  selected from the group consisting of a contract dataset and a contract deltadataset, said contract datagroup  $D_G$  identifying  $N$  purchase items purchasable from a vendor  $V$  keyed to the contract datagroup  $D_G$ , said  $N$  being an integer of at least 2, said contract datagroup  $D_G$  identifying the vendor  $V$  if the contract datagroup  $D_G$  is the contract dataset, said DES comprising a relational database that includes contract datasets, vendor datasets having vendors, and purchase item datasets having purchase items;

determining which, if any, of the  $N$  purchase items identified in the contract datagroup  $D_G$  match a purchase item in the purchase item datasets and determining a total number  $K$  of such purchase items in  $D_G$  that do not so match a purchase item in the purchase item datasets, said  $K$  being an integer satisfying  $0 \leq K < N$ ;

if the contract datagroup  $D_G$  is the contract dataset then determining that the vendor  $V$  matches a vendor in the vendor datasets and adding a subset of  $D_G$  to the relational database, said subset of  $D_G$  excluding the  $K$  purchase items from  $D_G$ ;

if the contract datagroup  $D_G$  is the contract deltadataset then adding to the first contract

dataset in the relational database R purchase items of  $D_G$ , wherein  $D_G$  is keyed to a first contract dataset in the relational database, and wherein the R purchase items of  $D_G$  consist of all purchase items of  $D_G$  exclusive of the K purchase items of  $D_G$ .

6. (Previously presented) The method of claim 5, wherein the DES further comprises a special database that includes contract datasets, wherein the contract datagroup  $D_G$  is the contract deltadataset, and wherein  $K > 0$  and said method further comprises:

if  $D_G$  is keyed to a first contract dataset in the special database, then adding to the first contract dataset in the special database the K purchase items of  $D_G$ ; and

if  $D_G$  is not keyed to any contract dataset in the special database, then forming from  $D_G$  a contract dataset  $D_{C1}$  that includes the K purchase items and excludes the R purchase items, and adding  $D_{C1}$  to the special database.

7. (Previously presented) The method of claim 5, wherein the contract datagroup  $D_G$  is the contract dataset and the vendor V does not match a vendor in the vendor datasets, then further comprising adding a vendor dataset  $D_V$  to the relational database when a contract based on the subset of  $D_G$  is required at the DES, said vendor dataset  $D_V$  keyed to the vendor V.

8. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein adding  $D_V$  to the relational database comprises extracting  $D_V$  from a vendor database prior to adding  $D_V$  to the relational database.

9. (Previously presented) The method of claim 7, wherein adding  $D_V$  to the relational database

comprises:

communicating a message to a DES buyer keyed to at least one purchase item of the R purchase items, each of said at least one purchase item matching a purchase item in the purchase item datasets, said message relating to adding  $D_V$  to the relational database; and

having the DES buyer cause  $D_V$  to be added to the relational database when the contract based on the subset of  $D_G$  is required at the DES.

10. (Original) The method of claim 5, wherein the contract datagroup  $D_G$  is the contract dataset.

11. (Original) The method of claim 5, wherein the contract datagroup  $D_G$  is the contract deltadataset.

12. (Previously presented) The method of claim 5, said PCMS being a systems applications and products (SAP) system, said DES being a SAP system, said relational database being a SAP database.

13. (Previously presented) A method for managing contract data, comprising:

receiving a contract dataset  $D_C$  by a decentralized execution system (DES) from a procurement contract management system (PCMS) over a data path within a computer network, said contract dataset  $D_C$  identifying a vendor V and N purchase items purchasable from the vendor V, said N being an integer of at least 1, said DES comprising a relational database that includes contract datasets, vendor datasets having vendors, and purchase item datasets having

purchase items, said DES further comprising a special database that includes contract datasets;

determining which, if any, of the  $N$  purchase items identified in the contract dataset  $D_C$  match a purchase item in the purchase item datasets and determining a total number  $K$  of such purchase items in  $D_C$  that do not so match a purchase item in the purchase item datasets, said  $K$  being an integer satisfying  $0 < K \leq N$ ;

if  $K = N$  then adding  $D_C$  to the special database;

if  $K < N$  then determining that the vendor  $V$  matches a vendor in the vendor datasets and adding a first subset of  $D_C$  to the relational database and if  $K > 0$  adding a second subset of  $D_C$  to the contract datasets of the special database, said first subset of  $D_C$  excluding the  $K$  purchase items from  $D_C$ , said second subset of  $D_C$  excluding  $R$  purchase items from  $D_C$ , wherein the  $R$  purchase items of  $D_C$  consist of all purchase items of  $D_C$  exclusive of the  $K$  purchase items of  $D_C$ .

14. (Previously presented) The method of claim 13, further comprising:

adding a new purchase item to the purchase item datasets;

determining whether the new purchase item is identified in a contract dataset  $D_{CS}$  of the special database; and

if the new purchase item is so identified in  $D_{CS}$  and  $D_{CS}$  identifies  $J$  purchase items such that  $J$  is an integer of at least 1, then determining whether a vendor identified in  $D_{CS}$  matches a vendor in the vendor datasets and if the vendor identified in  $D_{CS}$  so matches a vendor in the vendor datasets then:

if a contract identifier of  $D_{CS}$  matches a contract identifier of a first contract

dataset in the relational database then adding the new purchase item to the first contract

dataset, else

if the contract identifier of  $D_{CS}$  does not matches a contract identifier of any contract dataset in the relational database then adding a subset of  $D_{CS}$  to the relational database, said subset of  $D_{CS}$  including the new purchase item; and

if  $J = 1$  then deleting  $D_{CS}$  from the special database else deleting the new purchase item from  $D_{CS}$ .

15. (Original) The method of claim 14, further comprising extracting the new purchase item from a purchase item database prior to adding the new purchase item to the purchase item datasets.

16. (Previously presented) The method of claim 13, said PCMS being a systems applications and products (SAP) system, said DES being a SAP system, said relational database being a SAP database, said special database being a non-SAP database.

17-21. (Canceled).

22-27. (Cancelled)

28-31. (Canceled)

32-43. (Canceled)

44-48. (Canceled)

49-54. (Cancelled)

55. (Canceled)